

Verbal Practice Section 3: Hard Difficult

20 Questions
Time: 30 Minutes

For questions 1–6, select one entry for each blank from the corresponding column of choices. Fill in the blank in the way that best completes the text.

1. While it is tempting to think that artists like Picasso literally see the world in a markedly different way, examination of the artist's creative process reveals _____ movement from roughly realist sketches toward his famous Cubist style through a series of ever more abstract steps.

an obsessive
an iterative
arandom
ahistorical
adicey

2. Researchers from the University of Southampton concluded that ethnic differences are likely not the cause of mutual mistrust, citing government surveys which show that cooperation and trust are no higher in racially _____ neighborhoods than in mixed communities.

militant
parochial
provincial
homogeneous
sectarian

3. Though in her home country of Denmark the singer always enjoyed an outpouring of support verging on the (i) _____, she continues overseas to confront certain impediments to success — evidence, perhaps, that not all art is (ii) _____.

Blank (i) Blank (ii)

evanescent	fully decipherable
adulatory	universally translatable
totalitarian	entirely tractable

4. That (i) _____ rhetoric is so easily (ii) _____ the language of patriotism is perhaps one of the greatest

dangers of relying too heavily on the latter to bolster public morale.

Blank (i) Blank (ii)

pacifist	phased in
obsequious	couched in
bellicose	implied by

5. The very title of Evelyn Waugh's *Sword of Honour* trilogy suggests a robust and (i) _____ tale, and the bare outline seems to fit, as the protagonist Guy Crouchback serves as a commando, trains as a paratrooper, and is dispatched to Yugoslavia to aid the partisans. In fact, however, Crouchback is an extraordinarily (ii) _____ man, ill-at-ease with his younger and more (iii) _____ fellow officers, and almost never motivated by appetite or impulse.

Blank (i) Blank (ii) Blank (iii)

pell-mell	effete	vigorous
red-blooded	venerable	puerile
avant-garde	literary	timorous

6. In the contemporary climate of academic specialization, the typical university lecturer of only two centuries ago, who was expected to (i) _____ views on subjects as diverse as geography, physics, and the fine arts, seems a veritable (ii) _____, and we forget at our peril that it was precisely such breadth of learning that led to some of the great discoveries and even (iii) _____ shifts in the sciences, as when Darwin drew upon his knowledge of philosophy and economics to articulate his famous theory of evolution.

Blank (i) Blank (ii) Blank (iii)

propound	astrophysicist	hegemonic
gainsay	polymath	paradigmatic
delineate	autodidact	minuscule

Questions 7–10 are based on the following reading passage.

Without a doubt, one of the pinnacle achievements of modern physics is the development of Maxwell's equations. Their beauty lies in their elegant simplicity, while the breadth and depth of Maxwell's equations speak for themselves. These four simple equations, coupled with the Lorenz Force Equation, form a full basis for modeling the behavior of an entire branch of physics: classical electrodynamics and optics. Further, despite their deceptive simplicity, Maxwell's equations have withstood the test of time. While equations modeling most other fields of physics

- 5 have been modified to accommodate new experimental results and theories, Maxwell's equations have not been altered since their original conception in 1861. Take, for instance, Einstein's theory of general relativity, first published in 1916. Although the equation governing general relativity was also elegant and powerful, and laid the framework for most modern astrophysics, Einstein himself did not realize and correct an error within his equation until nearly fifteen years

10 later. Newtonian mechanics has given way to more powerful theoretical frameworks and analytical mechanics has bent under the weight of quantum theory, but Maxwell's equations stand as originally written, tried and true.

Maxwell's four equations, the majority of which are less than twenty characters, are the mathematical formulation of four very simple ideas. First, any free electric charge will result in an electric field. Second, magnets do not have free charges, but are always paired together with a positive and negative end, yielding a magnetic field that has a looped structure. Third, a magnetic field that changes in time will result in an electric field and, fourth, an electric current

or changing electric field will produce a magnetic field. It is truly amazing that these four simple rules, unmodified, have been used to model all electric, magnetic, and optics studies for more than 150 years.

7. Which of the following best expresses the author's intent in writing the passage?

- (A) To argue that Maxwell's equations are the most important equations in all of physics
- (B) To explain the significance and meaning of Maxwell's equations
- (C) To argue that Maxwell is a more important name in physics than Einstein
- (D) To describe the implications of each of Maxwell's four equations
- (E) To advocate further studies in the field of electromagnetism and optics

8. The author references Einstein's theory of general relativity for which of the following reasons?

- (A) To argue that the equations of electricity and magnetism are more important than the equations of relativity
- (B) To provide an example of an equation that has been unifying in time
- (C) To advocate that Maxwell was a more important historical figure than Einstein
- (D) To show that the implications of Maxwell's equations are far more powerful than General Relativity
- (E) To provide an example of an important equation that has been modified over time

9. Which of the following is not mentioned as a rule in any of Maxwell's four equations?

- (A) The looped structure of a magnetic field results from coupled charges.
- (B) A magnetic field that changes in time results in an electric field.
- (C) Any free electric charge results in an electric field.
- (D) Magnetic fields are generated by unpaired magnetic charges.
- (E) An electric current will produce a magnetic field.

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate all that apply.

10. Which of the following can be correctly inferred from the passage?

- ☐ Maxwell's four equations form a full basis for modeling the behavior of classical electrodynamics and optics.
- ☐ Einstein's original equations of general relativity were incorrect as originally written in 1916.
- ☐ Newtonian mechanics has been modified by quantum theory.

Question 11 is based on the following reading passage.

When people are told that some behavior is common, they are more likely to indulge in that behavior even when society disapproves of it. For example, if many people are shown littering in an anti-litter advertisement, observers may subconsciously feel that littering is a normal, accepted activity. Thus, in order to influence behavior effectively, it is critical not to show or discuss anyone engaging in an activity that the advertisement seeks to discourage.

11. Which of the following, if true, most undermines the argument's conclusion?

- (A) In a study, the most effective anti-smoking advertisement featured a person smoking amidst a disapproving crowd.
- (B) The most effective way to influence behavior is for parents to teach their children not to litter.
- (C) People who watch public service advertisements are typically aware that actors are merely pretending to engage in the disapproved behavior.
- (D) Teenagers are more likely to litter than the general population and less likely to be influenced by anti-litter advertisements.
- (E) In a study, the most effective anti-littering advertisement featured a pristine public park with children playing in the background.

For questions 12–15, select the two answer choices that, when used to complete the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole and produce completed sentences that are alike in meaning.

12. Although bonobos are a good deal more gregarious than chimpanzees, they do not hesitate to _____ those whose continued presence would otherwise undermine the safety or even equanimity of the group.

- ☐ patronize
- ☐ imperil
- ☐ oust
- ☐ jeopardize
- ☐ safeguard
- ☐ ostracize

13. Perhaps because his military training discouraged indirection, the National Incident Commander sought a _____ and open conversation with the Governor.

- ☐ plain
- ☐ profane
- ☐ frank
- ☐ brusque
- ☐ pert ☐ boisterous

14. Though croquet is proverbially a genteel game, it is not enough to play your own ball well — you must _____ your opponent's play as well, even when impeding his or her progress costs you strokes.

- ☐ scotch
- ☐ anticipate
- ☐ obviate

- ☐ underscore
- ☐ eliminate
- ☐ stimulate

15. A report in General Hospital Psychiatry finds that panic attacks _____ the effects of diabetes, probably by interfering with patients' self-care, leading to a 75-percent increase in the frequency of symptoms.

- ☐ exacerbate
- ☐ hinder
- ☐ impede
- ☐ aggravate
- ☐ indemnify
- ☐ degrade

Question 16 is based on the following reading passage.

A certain medication used to treat migraine headaches acts by blocking pain receptors in the brain. When a person takes the medication within one hour after ingesting grapefruit or grapefruit juice, however, the effectiveness of the medication is significantly diminished. Researchers have determined that the grapefruit contains a compound that alters the shape of the pain receptors, with the result that the medication can no longer bind with them completely.

16. Which of the following conclusions could be most properly drawn from the information given above?

- (A) If one takes the medication more than an hour after ingesting grapefruit, its effectiveness is not diminished.
- (B) Ingesting grapefruit after taking the medication does not diminish the effectiveness of the medication.
- (C) There is only one type of pain receptor in the brain.
- (D) The medication is fully effective only when it properly binds with its target pain receptors.
- (E) It is not possible to design a medication for migraine headaches that can bond with the altered receptors.

Questions 17–19 are based on the following reading passage.

Jeffrey C. Goldfarb suggests public-spirited dialog need not happen after a traditional theater show, as it is most successful when it happens through a show. He believes that the live component of the theater distinguishes it from other media objects, and allows meaning to arise from the interaction between performers and audience as the performance is happening.

Whereas television or film, for instance, has no room for active dialogue, theater does because the performers and audience are present in the space together. The theatrical text becomes the medium, and the performers

- 5 speak through the way in which they perform the text, while the audience does so through a number of culturally sanctioned actions: applause, laughter (both laughing with and laughing at), sighing, gasping, cheering, and booing. Goldfarb recounts a particular occurrence surrounding a production of *Dziady* (Forefather's Eve) in Poland in 1968. The show had been ordered to close and, on its last night, the theater was overcrowded with supporters. They

10 were an enthusiastic, vocal audience who entered into “dialogue” with the actors and read into the play’s anti-czarist language a critique of Soviet government. When the performance ended, the crowd went into the streets to protest. The play’s content became political through dialogue and, in a way, the theater building held a public sphere where an anti-Soviet public gathered to affirm their political sentiment before taking it to the street in open, public protest.

What Goldfarb does not write about is how uncommon such an event is, especially for today’s American theatergoers. Augusto Boal was probably closer to the reality of current Western theater when he complained about how still everyone is expected to keep during any performance, constantly policed by other audience members. The high prices on professional theater tickets and an elitist value on cultural tradition (versus popular, technology-based mass media) combine to produce an aristocratic culture surrounding theater. In this manner, a “high class” code of etiquette is imposed upon the performance space, dictating that audience members are to remain quiet: the actors speak, the audience listens. As Boal criticizes in *Legislative Theatre*, traditional form sets up a relationship where “everything travels from stage to auditorium, everything is transported, transferred in that direction — emotions, ideas, morality! — and nothing goes the other way.” He argues that this relationship encourages passivity and thus cancels theater’s political potential.

17. The primary purpose of the passage is

- (A) To lay out a viewpoint and present a perceived omission
- (B) To articulate an original thesis
- (C) To deride an established tradition
- (D) To contrast two opposing ideas
- (E) To reconcile two opposing ideas

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate all that apply.

18. The author implies which of the following about American theater?

- ☐ In some social settings, passivity is considered a virtue.
- ☐ Augusto Boal would approve of the events of the closing performance of *Dziady*.
- ☐ Physical presence has a bearing on the creation of active dialogue.

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate all that apply.

19. Which of the following must be true according to the passage?

- ☐ By American social mores, the Polish audience described would be exhibiting other than “high class” behavior.
- ☐ *Dziady* criticized the Soviet regime. ☐
- Theater is more educational than film.

Question 20 is based on the following reading passage.

In the 1930's, Pablum, the first pre-cooked, dried baby food was sold in America. Pablum took its name from the Latin word *pabulum*, which meant "foodstuff" and was also used in medicine to refer to a passively absorbed source of nutrition. While Pablum contained vitamin D and thus helped to prevent rickets in an era in which child malnutrition was still widespread, ironically, the word *pabulum* — undoubtedly influenced by the negative connotation of the word *pabulum* as well as the physical reality of a mushy, bland, rehydrated cereal — today means "trite, naive, or simplistic ideas or writings; intellectual pap."

20. Which of the following best describes the irony of the shifting meanings of the word *pabulum*?

- (A) A word for a passively absorbed source of nutrition is used for a substance actively fed to babies.
- (B) Many babies would have died of malnutrition without Pablum.
- (C) A word derived from Latin is still in use in modern English, although the meaning has changed somewhat.
- (D) A cereal designed to be nourishing now lends its name to a word for something lacking in substance.
- (E) Just as babies are fed bland food, *pabulum* today means "bland writing or ideas."

Answers to Verbal Practice Section 3

1. **An iterative.** The first part of the sentence suggests that the way Picasso sees the world is different from how it looks to you, while the second part tells you that his artistic process moves in stages *from* the way the world normally looks *toward* something called Cubism, which is in contrast to his “roughly realist” art. This means that the movement involves different, more and more abstract, *iterations* or versions of the same image, meaning that it is an iterative movement. *Iterative* means “involving repetition or reiteration.” Also, none of the other choices fit the idea of a movement that both takes place in steps and has a definite direction—it cannot be *random* or *dicey*, since it has a clear aim and structure. If you picked *obsessive*, watch out for inserting your own assumptions or opinions!

2. **Homogeneous.** You want a word that is opposed to “mixed,” and that describes areas without differences. If you borrow those very words, you might anticipate something like “unmixed, the same throughout.” *Homogeneous* has just this meaning.

3. **Adulatory, universally translatable.** If the singer enjoys an outpouring of support, we’d expect it to “verge” on extremely positive support—in this case, *adulation*, which means extreme adoration. But the fact that her art is not well received in other places means that it might not carry over, or *translate*, to those places. The two wrong answers for the second blank, which contain two words related to being “understandable” or “usable,” *decipherable* and *tractable*, are close, but do not capture the sense of artistic adaptation implied in the second clause.

4. **Bellicose, couched in.** Since the rhetoric presents a danger, you are looking for something dangerous: *bellicose*, meaning “aggressive or warlike,” is a perfect fit. *Obsequious* means servile, and *pacifist* means “favoring or supporting peace,” so neither of those seems particularly dangerous or likely to follow from patriotism. The bellicose rhetoric is *expressed in, phrased in, or laid out in* the language of patriotism; *couched in* means the same thing as *laid out in*. This is a better fit than *implied by*, since to say that patriotism *implies* bellicose rhetoric is to make the assumption that patriotism is aggressive in itself, rather than simply yielding easily to aggression.

5. **Red-blooded, effete, vigorous.** The first word should echo “robust,” and fit the military derring-do described in the bare outline. *Red-blooded* suggests virility and heartiness. “In fact, however” suggests that Crouchback is not actually robust, and he is further described as “ill-at-ease,” and *never motivated by appetite or impulse*. These suggest something like “feeble” or “impotent.” *Effete* is even better, as it describes someone lacking vigor and energy. For your third word, the phrasing “and more” suggests a contrast with Crouchback; we’re not looking, then, for something that is a pure synonym for “younger” but for something that goes against the description of Crouchback as “effete.” Maybe “energetic.” The best answer is *vigorous*. *Puerile* is a trap—it seems to echo “younger,” but the sentence does not suggest that these younger officers are immature.

6. **Propound, polymath, paradigmatic.** The university lecturer was expected to have, or to set out, views on diverse subjects. To *propound* a view is to set it forward or lay it out. *Delineate* (lay out the boundaries of) is not a good fit; *gainsay* means to contradict, and while the lecturer may have the ability to contradict views on diverse subjects, this doesn’t make as much sense as laying them out. You know that these lecturers were widely learned; a person with a wide, practically encyclopedic breadth of knowledge is a *polymath*. *Astrophysicist* doesn’t fit, since it is only the name of one specialized branch of study; an *autodidact* is someone who is self-taught. In the final blank, you are looking for something stronger than discoveries: something like a change (or shift) in the way science is done, or the way scientific theories are understood—the theory of evolution is an example of such a change. A *paradigm* is a model or template for doing something, and is what you are looking for.

7.(B).The author uses the first paragraph of the passage to explain why Maxwell's equations are so significant.The second paragraph discusses the meaning of each of Maxwell's equations.Thus,as answer choice (B) presents both of these ideas,it is the correct answer.Further,(A) incorrectly states that this passage is used to argue that Maxwell's equations are the most important in physics,which is never stated in the passage.(C) incorrectly compares Maxwell to Einstein,which is never done in the passage.(D) is too narrow ;it fails to address the author's intent in writing the first paragraph.Finally,the author does not advocate for further studies as described in answer choice (E).

8.(E).Before introducing Einstein's theory of general relativity,the author states that Maxwell's equations have withstood the test of time.He/She goes on to say that,in contrast,although Einstein's equations are elegant and powerful,they had to be modified not long after their postulation.Therefore,the author uses Einstein's theory of general relativity to provide an example of an important equation that has been modified over time,as in answer (E). (A) is incorrect as the author does not directly compare the fields of electricity and magnetism and relativity.(B) is incorrect as it states the opposite of what is mentioned in the paragraph.(C) incorrectly compares Maxwell to Einstein as opposed to their equations.Finally,(D) is incorrect because the implications of Maxwell's equations are never compared to the power of Einstein's general relativity.

9.(D).The passage states that magnets do not have free charges but are always paired together with a positive and negative end.Therefore,answer choice (D) is not mentioned,as it claims that magnetic fields are generated by unpaired magnetic charges.Answer choice (A) is presented in Maxwell's first equation: paired,or coupled,charges yield a looped magnetic field.(B) is presented in Maxwell's third equation,(C) is presented in Maxwell's first equation,and (E) is presented in Maxwell's fourth equation.

10.**II only.**The passage states that Einstein did not realize and correct an error in his theory of general relativity until 15 years after the theory was postulated in 1916.Therefore,Einstein's original equations of general relativity must have been incorrect as written in 1916.The first statement cannot be inferred as the passage says that Maxwell's equations,coupled with the Lorenz Force Equation,form the full basis for electrodynamics and optics.From this,one cannot infer that Maxwell's equations alone form a full basis for electrodynamics and optics.The third statement incorrectly infers that Newtonian mechanics has been modified by quantum theory,whereas the last sentence in the first paragraph states that it is analytical mechanics,and not Newtonian mechanics,that has been modified by quantum theory.

11.(A).According to the argument,if many people are shown littering in an anti-litter ad,then those watching the ad may feel that littering is normal or accepted.The author concludes from this that the "bad" behavior should not be shown or discussed *at all* in an ad that seeks to discourage this "bad" behavior.We're asked to find a piece of information that weakens the author's conclusion.(A) is correct.The author assumes that *any* mention of the negative behavior is enough to make people feel that the behavior is normal or accepted.The premise indicates only that this occurs when many people are shown to actively engage in the negative behavior.This choice illustrates that the author's assumption is not valid: a very effective anti-smoking ad featured one person smoking.That is,an effective ad did feature someone engaging in the negative behavior.While (B) may be true,the conclusion is not concerned with the most effective way to influence a particular type of behavior.Rather,the conclusion focuses on what should *not* be done if one wants to discourage a negative behavior.Regarding (C),the conclusion focuses on what not to do (show or discuss the discouraged behavior) in order to influence behavior in an effective manner.The fact that observers are aware that the ads may feature actors does not influence that particular conclusion.Regarding (D),the conclusion is not concerned with whether advertisements are more or less effective than other means for influencing teenagers,nor is it concerned with what *should* be done to influence this group (or others).Rather,the conclusion focuses on what should *not* be done if one wants to discourage a certain behavior.Finally,(E) strengthens the author's position: the best advertisement does not show the behavior that the ad seeks to discourage.You were asked to weaken the argument,not strengthen it.

12.**Oust,ostracize.**"Although" implies that you want an action that you wouldn't ordinarily expect from "gregarious,"

or friendly, animals, so you want something like “be unfriendly to.” The “otherwise” in *continued presence* would otherwise undermine implies that bonobos sometimes do something to “exclude” others. *Oust* and *ostracize* fit. *Im peril* and *jeopardize* both mean something like “endanger,” but this pair does not oppose “continued presence” as directly as do *oust* and *ostracize*.

13. Plain, frank. Since his training “discouraged indirection,” you can expect a word like “direct.” The word *open* suggests that the Commander wanted to be “candid.” *Plain* and *frank* both mean something like “direct and candid.” They both suggest unornamented but not necessarily unfriendly speech. *Brusque*, on the other hand (like *curt* or *terse*), suggests a discourteous bluntness.

14. Scotch, stymie. “Though” suggests that the word is opposed to gentility, and so you might expect something like “behave coarsely toward.” The word *impeding* gives you a more precise idea: you want something like “aggressively block.” *Scotch*, which means “abruptly end,” and *stymie*, which means “thwart,” are both good.

15. Exacerbate, aggravate. Since panic attacks eventually lead to a 75 percent increase in the frequency of symptoms, they make the effects of diabetes much worse. You should anticipate a word that means “make worse.” *Exacerbate* and *aggravate* have precisely this meaning. In some contexts *hinder* and *impede*, which mean “block,” would mean “make worse,” but blocking the symptoms of a disease would actually make those symptoms better. Similarly, *degrade* is a bad word, meaning variously “demote, debase, impair,” but none of its meanings work here.

16. (D). The passage says that the medication has been shown to be less effective when taken after grapefruit consumption because grapefruit consumption has been shown to affect the binding of the medication to pain receptors. It can be concluded that effective binding is needed to enable the full effectiveness of the medication, which is what (D) states. Regarding (A), the passage says that grapefruit or grapefruit juice ingested within an hour will “significantly” diminish the effectiveness of the medication. This does not mean that grapefruit or grapefruit juice ingested more than an hour before the medication is ingested will have no effect on the medication; it may have a mild effect. Regarding (B), the passage speaks only of taking the medication after ingesting grapefruit; it says nothing about what might happen when eating grapefruit after taking the medication. As for (C), the passage implies that the pain receptors that the specific medication works on are the pain receptors that are affected by grapefruit. This does not mean that these are the only pain receptors in the brain. (E) is out of scope. You are given no information about possible research or design of new migraine medications.

17. (A). The author presents Goldfarb’s view in the first paragraph and then highlights an omission in Goldfarb’s work in the second paragraph. (B) is incorrect because “original” contradicts the text — the author recounts the opinions of Goldfarb and Boal. (C) is wrong, as the author does not “deride” anything, and the word *established* is not supported by the text. (D) is eliminated because there is no contrast nor opposing ideas — Goldfarb neglected to mention that something he discussed was quite uncommon, but Goldfarb’s ideas do not oppose Boal’s. Similarly, in (E), no reconciliation is attempted and there are still no opposing ideas.

18. I, II, and III. The first statement must be true, as the second paragraph indicates that American audiences consider passive behavior polite. The second statement must be true since, according to the last sentence of the second paragraph, Boal criticized passivity because it “cancels theater’s political potential.” The third statement is a nice match for this sentence from the first paragraph: “Whereas television or film, for instance, have no room for active dialogue, theater does because the performers and audience are present in the space together.”

19. I only. In the first paragraph, the passage describes the interaction between the Polish audience and the cast; in the second paragraph, the author tells you that American “high class” behavior involves remaining quiet in the theater. Together, these two pieces of information support the first statement. The second statement is incorrect — the passage states that the audience “read into” or *interpreted* the anti-czarist language as a critique of the Soviet regime;

While the play may very well have been intended that way, you can't know this from the passage. The comparison concerning education in the third statement is unjustified because the passage only states that the live element is unique to theater.

20. **(D)**. The word *irony* is defined as “an outcome of events contrary to what was, or might have been, expected.” (A) is not ironic — the medical term *pabulum* means a passively absorbed nutrition, and babies receive the baby food Pablum in a passive way. (B), (C), and (E) may be true, but also do not fit the definition of ironic. (D) is indeed ironic — the word now means nearly the opposite of what was originally intended. Only (D) presents this kind of “twist.”